



Idaho Farm Update

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Northern Idaho

Harvest is complete in northern Idaho, severely limiting employment until spring. Workers at the hops farms in Boundary County will continue winterizing until the end of the month. In mid-October, the ornamental tree nurseries in Boundary and Bonner counties will hire extra crews for grading, sorting and shipping. Those jobs will last until late November. Christmas tree farms will start harvest in late October. The workers they hire will work through mid-December. Workers at tree nurseries and tree farms typically earn between \$7 and \$9 per hour.

Southwestern Idaho

The start of the harvest season is now upon us, and farmers throughout southwestern Idaho are hiring truck drivers at \$6.50 to \$10 an hour to haul silage, beets, potatoes and onions. Field laborers are being sought to harvest hops, potatoes, onions and beets at pay rates of \$6 to \$8 an hour. With the onion harvest under way, area packing sheds are hiring workers to sort and trim, package, weigh and tie onion bags at between \$5.75 and \$7.50 an hour. There are also some miscellaneous jobs available such as equipment operators at \$9 to \$10 per hour and irrigators at \$6 per hour.

South Central Idaho

Wheat harvest is nearly complete, but there are still a few job openings for combine operators at \$7.50 to \$11 an hour and truck drivers at \$6 to \$9 per hour. Early potato harvest has begun, and producers need harvester operators at \$8 to \$12 an hour and workers on the harvester to sort out dirt clods, rocks and bad potatoes. These jobs pay \$6 to \$9 an hour. Farmers are also lining up truck drivers for \$6 to \$9 an hour and equipment for the dry bean and sugar beet harvests that commence later this month. Equipment operator earn \$7 to \$12 per hour depending on the type of equipment. Ranch hands who can ride a horse can earn \$7 to \$10 an hour and room and board to herd livestock from rural summer grazing lands to winter quarters. The dairy industry has a few openings for full-time milkers at \$22,000 to \$28,000 a year. Relief milkers generally are paid \$8.50 to \$12 per hour.

Southeastern Idaho

The weather has been hot and dry in southeastern Idaho, but there is hope temperatures will drop soon. Farm activity during the next two weeks will focus on the potato harvest. Growers are still harvesting grain, preparing fields for winter, irrigating stubble and drilling winter grain. Early potato harvest has been under way while vines are being killed in preparation for regular potato harvest, which will run into October. The sugar beet harvest is basically completed. Growers finishing fieldwork for fall planting and beginning the potato harvest need experienced combine and equipment operators at \$7 to \$8.50 an hour, harvest truck drivers at \$8 per hour and harvest workers including potato sorters, graders, trimmers, packagers, assemblers and laborers from \$6 to \$7 per hour.

East Central Idaho

Beautiful summer days with cool night and hints of a few storms have filled the last several weeks in east central Idaho. Hay is still growing well. Grain harvest has started, and potato harvest is just around the corner. Some producers are already starting in the southern parts of the area. Harvest equipment and storage warehouses are still being readied for heavy use. Fields that have already been harvested are being prepped for next year or for winter crops. Operators are hiring farm laborers, irrigators and harvest workers at \$6 to \$8.47 per hour, ranch hands at \$8 to \$8.20 an hour or \$1,500 per month including housing, equipment operators at \$6 to \$9 per hour, truck drivers at \$7 to \$8 an hour and beekeeper laborers at \$8.47 per hour.

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